

# Interpretation of the Aesthetic Culture and Thoughts Embodied in Tao Te Ching

Liu Jing

Shaanxi Xueqian Normal University, Xi'an, Shaanxi, China

**Keywords:** Interpretation, Aesthetic Culture and Thoughts, Tao Te Ching

**Abstract:** Laozi is the Founder of Taoist Philosophy and the Founder of Taoist Ideology. According to the Aesthetic Interpretation of His Thoughts in Later Generations, he is Also Considered to Be an Important Pioneer of Taoist Aesthetics. This Article is Based on the Tao of Laozi in the Tao Te Ching, and the Thought of "Truth" in Tao Te Ching is Also from the Meaning of Taoism and Morality. the Direction of Art Theory Develops, So That It Has Aesthetic Implications and Explores Its Influence and Significance.

## 1. Introduction

With the continuous development of Chinese aesthetics, its unique national cultural background, aesthetic psychology and way of thinking have made scholars from other countries in the world have great interest in Chinese aesthetics. Specific to the study of Laozi, Western scholars have not only books based on the Chinese cultural background, but also works based on the perspective of Western culture.

Mr. Ye Lang pointed out in the "Outline of Chinese Aesthetic History" that "Laozi aesthetics is the starting point of Chinese aesthetics history", and gave Laozi a very high status in aesthetics. The book first discusses the "Tao" and "Qi" in Laozi's aesthetics. "Xiang" reveals the influence of Laozi philosophy on Chinese classical aesthetics. Then I discussed Laozi's propositions such as "Yes", "None", "Virtual", "Real" and "Beauty", "Miao" and "Taste", and made a more detailed aesthetic interpretation of Laozi's thought. However, the book does not specifically address the issue of "truth" in Laozi's thought. In addition, in his book "Modern Aesthetic System", he has cleaned up an aesthetic system from the ancient Chinese to the Qing Dynasty Wang Fuzhi, Ye Wei, Shi Tao, etc. from the two thousand years of ancient Chinese aesthetics, from the theory of vitality, imagery, Beginning with the theory of artistic conception and aesthetics, I will use Laozi's thought as the source of this aesthetic system for aesthetic interpretation. The book also mentions the important position of Laozi aesthetics in Chinese classical aesthetics. The creation of aesthetic personality

Laozi's view on personality ideals is totally different from the prevailing view of the pre-Qin period. In "Shang Shu·Zhou Shu·Thai Oath", there is a reference to "the mother of all things, the spirit of all things." "Bao Puzi" records the view that "there is no life, no more than people." Confucianism also starts from this angle and the humanity's "benevolence, righteousness, righteousness and wisdom" is a four-terminal statement. However, Laozi believes that the state of human nature, ignorant and unintentional, is the most authentic character of human beings. On this basis, his thoughts on personality ideals derived from the unique characteristics of life have the possibility of being over-excited or aesthetic.

The "beauty" in Laozi's thought is different from the sensory enjoyment of the secularism or the "goodness" in the moral sense. In Laozi's case, the true "beauty" is embodied in the transcendental "Tao", and the transcendence character embodied in "Tao" provides the possibility that Laozi's thought is transformed from Taoism to Beauty. This can be confirmed from Laozi's work. For example, in the fourteenth chapter of the Tao Te Ching: "I don't know the name, I don't know the name, I don't know the name, I don't know how to beat it, so the three can't be blamed, so it's mixed. Oh, it's not awkward, the rope is unnamed, and it's back to nothing. It's a form of innocence, no image of things. It's not seen at first, and then disappears." This chapter is Describe the characteristics of the "Tao". This feature is not experienced in the human experience, so our understanding of the "Tao" is usually considered to be invisible, even inexpressible. However, it

seems to Laozi that “Tao” has such “invisible”, “inaudible”, “unsatisfied” and “less odorless”. The characteristics of “image” have created an unreachable beauty.

‘Natural inaction’ is the most important concept of Laozi’s philosophy.” Laozi always believes that “natural inaction” and “trueness” are the nature of Tao. He advocated “human law, earth law, heaven and law, and Taoism” (Chapter 25), “is a simple naturalist in early China.” The term “nature” here means “not to insist on and change what is with your own personal will, but to have a natural meaning.” According to Mr. Chen Wangheng’s understanding, the core of the “natural” and “true” ideas points to It is consistent. It can be seen from the fifth chapter of the Tao Te Ching, “Heaven and earth are not benevolent, all things are hyenas” and in the seventy-ninth chapter, “Heavenly and unaccompanied, often with good people” can be seen, “Tao” derives everything from heaven to earth. Therefore, the nature of human beings is consistent with the nature of “Tao” in the direction.

Aesthetic personality is an academic issue that has received much attention and needs further study. It is a topic developed from the ideological foundation of the development of personality in the pre-Qin period in China. The more in-depth explanation of this issue by Taoism, one of the two branches of traditional culture in China, provides an important theoretical source for the formation of later aesthetic personality. The Taoist school represented by Laozi has a unique perspective on the issue of personality realm, and is committed to constructing the ideal personality of nature and simplicity. In Laozi’s thought, the most primitive happiness of life and the place where people settle down are based on returning to the nature of nature and keeping the state of simplicity. Laozi’s pursuit of “beauty” is to find an ultra-existent, non-utilitarian, purely natural beauty. Therefore, Laozi believes that to realize the realm of harmony between man and nature, and between man and nature, it is necessary for people to return to the basics and clear the soul, so that the natural beauty of human nature can be freely expressed.

Laozi’s thought attaches importance to aesthetic personality not only because of Laozi’s calm observation and profound analysis of the social reality since the Spring and Autumn Period and the Warring States Period, but also because Laozi criticized the traditional patriarchal ideology, culture and morality since the Western Zhou Dynasty from the height of Taoism and nature. . Therefore, he regarded the ritual music system and ethics as the mainstream of the people at that time as the product of alienation and loss of nature. He believed that this is a distortion of the natural nature of human beings and a distortion of human morality. These are all necessary. It is completely negated. Therefore, he opposes all the sacred actions such as “holy” and “smart”, and advocates the sinful abandonment of wisdom and the admiration of the innocent aesthetic personality. Xu Xiaohua puts forward that “we put this kind of Fengshen elegant, let nature be extraordinary, and the extraordinary personality is called natural personality. It is also an aesthetic personality. We call it the natural aesthetic personality.” In philosophy of life and aesthetics, ‘Tao Law Nature’ is implemented as ‘human law and nature’, that is, people understand human nature according to the original appearance of things and their own way, standardize life and create a natural aesthetic personality.”

## **2. The Cultivation of Aesthetic Mind**

The theory of “aesthetic mind” was first proposed by Mr. Ye Lang in the book “The Outline of Chinese Aesthetic History”. Later, he pointed out in “The Principles of Aesthetics”: “The theory of aesthetic attitude in Western aesthetics is the theory of aesthetics in Chinese aesthetics. The theory of aesthetics in Chinese aesthetics originated from Laozi’s thoughts.” In addition, the aesthetic mind A theory is also defined as an empty state of mind in which the subject transcends all interests. The aesthetic mind is also considered to be a spiritual premise of the aesthetic subject in the process of artistic appreciation and artistic creation.

There is still a passage in the original text of the Tao Te Ching that can be regarded as the play of the idea of “deconstructing the mystery”. It is the sixteenth chapter that must be mentioned: “To the virtual pole, to keep the silence. “This paragraph is to return to the most natural and original state according to the original appearance of things. To achieve this, people need to keep the state of

mind empty and quiet. Because only the interference of material desires in the real society is ruled out, the return to the heart can realize the observation and understanding of Laozi's way, and can realize the cognition of the origin and change of everything in the universe. The above-mentioned "deconstruction of Xuanjian" and "to keep quiet" emphasizes that the clarity and desire of the mind is an important prerequisite for gaining a true view of things. This not only indicates the true connection between the two and nature, but also reveals the important characteristics of aesthetic non-utilitarianism.

This ideological tendency of Laozi not only has philosophical revelation, but also provides theoretical legitimacy for Zhuangzi's thought to advance into the field of art and aesthetics. On the basis of Laozi's thought, Zhuangzi started from the spiritual freedom of human beings. He put the metaphysical pure philosophical speculation down into life and art. From this perspective, Laozi's theory of "deconstructing Xuanjian" truly has aesthetic significance in the development of later generations, thus making the idea of "truth" in the Tao Te Ching indirectly have the legitimacy to the development of the aesthetic field. The aesthetics of later generations and the pursuit of aesthetic individuals have an important foundational role.

The unity of aesthetics and aesthetics is established in the traditional Chinese aesthetic concept, and the things that meet the standards of goodness meet the standards of beauty. This aesthetic is closely related to beauty and goodness, and requires the unity of beauty and goodness. It is believed that only the combination of beauty and goodness is the true beauty. Under this aesthetic concept, "goodness" resides in a higher dominance than "beauty". The essence of its aesthetic thought lies in turning art into a tool of feudal autocratic rule. Aesthetic activities must conform to the moral premise of feudal patriarchal system. Under the feudal social system of maintaining class relations at that time, the concept of the unity of beauty and goodness became a traditional aesthetic that occupied an important position and significant influence in Chinese history. However, Laozi's significance in expressing aesthetics in aesthetics holds a different view. The basic principle of natural simplicity that Laozi follows is that all man-made things are against the falseness of the true nature of things. All man-made "goodness" is "hypocrisy", and then all the "beauty" that destroys the nature of nature is not Real beauty. It is through the criticism of the traditional aesthetics of goodness and beauty that Laozi has opened up Taoism as the beauty and advocates the aesthetics of the unity of beauty and truth.

In the practice of art, the aesthetic significance of Laozi's "true" thought is also reflected in the aesthetics of the unity of beauty and truth, that is, the emphasis on a natural and artistic creation and artistic appreciation. In the second chapter, Laozi said, "There is nothing to do, and teaches nothing." He believes that everything including art, reaching a natural state that is not artificially decorated and integrated with the Tao is its highest realm. Any artificial carving will damage its natural beauty. However, artistic creation and artistic works are a process and result of embodying intuitive inner enlightenment in the external art form. The creation and appreciation of any artistic work contains the subjective color of the creator and the appreciator. The artificial factor. How to achieve the realm of letting the work not show such artificial efforts and showing "naturally" is the pursuit of the highest realm of art, so it is precisely those who can be regarded as superior can not show human traces and can See the true works of art. Such a work is an art work that conforms to the aesthetic and aesthetics of the United States. "It requires the creative subject to enter a state of emptiness and quietness in the process of creation, and integrate with the object of creation to understand the aesthetic 'Tao' of art creation and its implication. Among them, the universe, nature and the mystery of life. This kind of "human and human unity" is the purest state of existence of human beings, that is, 'the true being is', it is also an aesthetic spirit. Presence state." The state of quiescence that is required to be maintained in this realm is a state of returning to the true state. Maintaining this "true" state is the premise of artistic creation and artistic appreciation. In Laozi's thought, the method of aesthetic experience is Laozi's "deconstruction"; the highest realm of aesthetic experience is the "reality" to be realized under the premise of purification.

In summary, Laozi's aesthetic concept has a clear tendency to worship and falsify. This tendency conveys the contribution of Laozi's thought to the establishment of a beautiful aesthetic. In this

thought, Lao Tzu believes that the true state of ideals, truth and beauty are completely undifferentiated, and the two are always united. It is as if the unprocessed wood and the “baby” not exposed to society have a high degree of perfection in the original sense. All in all, in Lao Tzu's thought, the beauty of nature, according to reality, and from inaction is the true beauty. At the same time, Laozi used the ideal state of unity of beauty and beauty as a reference, and gave a thorough criticism and denial of all the so-called “beauty” that is not in line with the basic principle of natural simplicity. The so-called “Laozi's sham” is a testimony to Lao Tzu's attitude toward “true” thinking. The “true” thought involved in Laozi's thought has created a Taoist aesthetic tradition that emphasizes the unity of true beauty and beauty in the history of Chinese aesthetics.

### **3. Conclusion**

Laozi is an important founder of Taoist philosophy. The aesthetic interpretation of Laozi's thought helps to enrich the development of aesthetics in theory. Although there are not many remarks on “beauty” directly in the book “Laozi”, the philosophical reflections on the issues of life and society and their discourses in the book are used by the later generation theorists in the field of aesthetics to have a very profound aesthetic significance. At the same time, it has had a profound impact.

### **References**

- [1] Qian Jing. Laozi's Theory and Chinese Aesthetic Spirit[J]. Hebei Academic Journal, 1992(1): 68-73.
- [2] Tian Jianping. On Laozi's Aesthetic Thoughts[J]. Journal of Inner Mongolia University (Humanities and Social Sciences), 1998(2): 97-102.
- [3] Zhu Xiaopeng. The Aesthetic Implication of Laozi's Taoism[J]. Qinghai Social Sciences, 2000(2): 64-69.
- [4] Ma Guozhu. On the Aesthetic Significance of Laozi's “Big”[J]. Journal of Renmin University of China, 1999(5): 102-105.
- [5] Zhang Qiang. “The Tao can't be said” - The interpretation of the aesthetic thought of Laozi's “Tao”[J]. Jianghai Academic Journal, 1998(4): 154-159.
- [6] Wang Zhenfu. The Aesthetic Significance of Guodian Bamboo Slips Laozi-Re-recognition of Laozi Aesthetics[J]. Academic Monthly, 2001(11): 51-59.